

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK**

In re Terrorist Attacks on September 11, 2001	03 MDL 1570 (GBD) (SN) ECF Case
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This document relates to:

Ashton et al. v. al Qaeda Islamic Army, et al., 02-cv-6977 (GBD)(SN) (and member case
Burlingame v. Bin Laden, et al., 02-cv-7230 (GBD)(SN))

The *Burlingame XI* Personal Injury Plaintiffs' Motion for Partial Final Judgments

EXHIBIT F

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STATE OF MARYLAND)
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY)

KATHY CORDERO, hereby states under penalty of perjury that:

1. I am a resident citizen of the state of Maryland, currently 60 years of age, and I am a survivor of the September 11th attacks. I suffered significant burn injuries when American Airlines Flight 77 struck the Pentagon.

2. I hold a Masters Degree in Business and worked as a civilian for the Department of Defense with the U.S. Government.

3. On the morning of September 11th, I was sitting at my desk in my office, where I had worked as a civilian Senior Financial Resources Manager for the Department of Defense for nearly ten years. There was a television on and we were watching coverage of the attacks on the World Trade Center. I had called my husband and left him a message to ask whether he thought I should leave the office in light of the attacks in New York.

4. I was suddenly thrown across the office and covered in debris and jet fuel. I was trapped under sections of the ceiling that had fallen on me, but my colleague helped move the debris off me to help me escape. Orange flames and thick, choking black smoke were everywhere. My arm was on fire. The heat was unimaginable – it felt like the air was on fire.

5. Three of my colleagues and I tried to escape, but in every direction there were walls of fire. There were no lights and the black smoke was blinding as we climbed over the debris. At one point we came across a puddle of water so I dipped my burning arm into the puddle. I could see the flesh melting off my arm. We all dipped our shirts into the water and used them to cover our mouths and noses in an effort to help us breathe.

6. I followed the sound of my colleague's voice to a hole he had broken through in one of the walls. On the other side of that wall, there was a hallway, still filled with black smoke so thick that we couldn't see anything. One of the men who was on that side of the wall led us down the end of the hallway to a courtyard. We were outside. It was chaos. There was debris everywhere. People were running and screaming that another plane was coming, but thankfully, it was a military plane.

7. My colleagues flagged down a police car and directed them to me. The police officers brought me to the hospital where I was put in a medically induced coma for 6 days.

8. I suffered first, second and third degree burns to my face and left arm. I also suffered severe inhalation injuries from the thick, black smoke that filled the air, and injuries to my shoulder and spine as a result of the debris that fell on me. I developed pneumonia from the smoke inhalation and aspiration injuries. I remained in the intensive care unit until my lungs began to improve enough that the surgeons believed I could withstand surgery.

9. On September 18th, I underwent my first skin graft. On September 24th, I underwent another. I was hospitalized for most of that September, undergoing multiple skin grafts to repair the burns to my left arm, utilizing skin from my left thigh donor site, leaving the equivalent of second-degree burn scars to my thigh. The burns to my scalp and forehead were treated with Silvadene and antibiotics. While I was in the hospital, my burns would require debridement, a

painful process by which the dead and decaying flesh was literally scrubbed away. The pain that this procedure causes is indescribable. I was discharged from the hospital on September 28, 2001.

10. My left arm developed raised scars and abnormal pigmentation while my forehead developed a hyperpigmentation. The scars on my left arm have caused contractures that left me with carpal tunnel syndrome in my left wrist. The inhalation injuries I suffered resulted in a permanent change to my voice, and leave left me unable to speak for extended periods of time. I lose my breath quite easily, and as a result, cannot even walk great distances without being overcome and short of breath. My husband has had to take over any physical chores I once handled. These physical scars and changes in my voice cause me to feel incredibly self-conscious, and as a result, to this day I tend to avoid social situations, and I do my best to keep my scars covered, always wearing long sleeves to cover my left arm, and thick makeup to cover the hyperpigmentation of my forehead.

11. The injuries to my left shoulder and lumbar spine cause me great pain and have limited my physical activities as well. Doctors have recommended surgery to decompress my acromioclavicular joint, but I simply do not have the fortitude to voluntarily undergo another surgical procedure.

12. My physical scars are a daily reminder of my emotional devastation. I am no longer the person I was before September 11, 2001. I will never forget the sights and sounds and smells of that morning. I will never forget what it looked like to see my own skin dripping from my arm. But I am among the lucky ones. I will also never forget my dear friends and colleagues who died that morning, my dear friend who told me about the attacks in New York and who was killed in the explosion that rocked our office when Flight 77 hit the Pentagon. I will never see her again and I miss her friendship dearly.

13. I do not engage in the activities I enjoyed before the attacks, in part because of the pain and disability that I continue to suffer as a result of my burns and orthopedic injuries, but more so because of my emotional state. Unfortunately for my husband and our daughter, I no longer resemble the woman I once was.

14. I have been diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and despite my efforts to bury or compartmentalize my feelings and to appear “normal” to the world, I suffer tremendous anxiety and depression as a result of the attacks. I need only look in the mirror to be brought back to the events of that day. When I lose my breath as a result of physical exertion, I am vividly reminded of the terror of escaping the burning Pentagon. When I close my eyes at night, I am there again, in the debris, choking on the black smoke. The events of that day haunt me in my sleep.

15. I have tried to return to work since the attacks. Indeed, I even tried to return to work part time in November 2001, I think in an effort to appear “okay” or perhaps in an effort to be patriotic. In retrospect, that was a mistake, and it did not last. The pain in my left shoulder and wrist leave me unable to utilize a computer for any extended period, and my back pain prevents me from sitting at a desk. I cannot speak for more than a few minutes before my throat becomes hoarse and I begin to lose my voice. And as these physical reminders of the attacks build, my emotional scars overwhelm me.

16. While my physical limitations have prevented me from returning to a career I loved, my emotional scars have prevented me from returning to my life.

Dated: Fort Washington, MD
January 28, 2020


KATHY CORDERO

Sworn to before me this
28th of January 2020


Notary Public

